

**CITY OF LODI  
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2002**

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, July 16, 2002 commencing at 7:01 a.m.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Present: Council Members – Hitchcock, Howard, Land, Nakanishi (arrived at 7:05 a.m.),  
and Mayor Pennino

Absent: Council Members – None

Also Present: City Manager Flynn, City Attorney Hays, and Deputy City Clerk Perrin

Announcements

Mayor Pennino wished a speedy recovery to Council candidate, Don Lindsay, who will be undergoing heart surgery later this week.

**B. CITY COUNCIL CALENDAR UPDATE**

Deputy City Clerk Perrin reviewed the weekly calendar (filed).

**C. TOPIC(S)**

C-1 "Central City Railroad Safety Improvement Project Update"

NOTE: Council Member Nakanishi arrived at 7:05 a.m.

Public Works Director Prima directed Council's attention to the revised background material (filed) regarding this morning's subject. The Central City Railroad Safety Improvement Project has been on-going for quite some time, but recent negotiations have brought the City much closer to arriving at a plan to remove the tracks on Lodi Avenue.

Charlie Swimley, Senior Civil Engineer, provided a recap of the project goals:

- Improve rail safety in Lodi by removing the tracks on Lodi Avenue, removing 15 crossings, and installing a pedestrian crossing at Calaveras Street to funnel school children to Lawrence School.
- Improve the pavement surface on Lodi Avenue. Staff plans to pave over the existing tracks and in the future do a complete street reconstruction.
- Encourage redevelopment of the Lodi Avenue corridor.
- Secure reliable railroad service to Lodi.
- Improve Lockeford Street.

The project proposes the reconstruction of the north wye, (Kentucky House Branch railroad), which is in need of repair. To create a clearance, it is necessary to move tracks and construct an interchange yard, consisting of four tracks. The plan also calls for the construction of a pedestrian barrier and crossing at Central Avenue and Calaveras Street for children to cross safely, with new signal crossings at the north wye and at Stockton Street and upgrades at Washington Street, Cherokee Lane, Guild Avenue, and Cluff Avenue. Rail and ballast/base replacements and upgrades will be made at the Kentucky House Branch, and additionally the tracks will be realigned to accommodate areas for future road widening. A new curve will be created to connect the Kentucky House Branch to the existing Central California Traction (CCT) lines, running north and south through town. Initially the plan calls for the tracks on Lodi Avenue to be paved over, the reconstruction of the new switching facilities east of Highway 99 on Lodi Avenue, and the abandonment of the Beckman Road crossing, which would allow for a new driveway entrance into the K-Mart shopping center.

In response to Council Member Howard, Mr. Swimley stated that the pedestrian crossing will be on a smaller and simpler scale and will include lights.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hitchcock questioned why the Lockeford Street widening, included on the original Shirtsleeve enclosure, was removed from the plan.

Public Works Director Prima replied that an old City plan shows four lanes on Lockeford Street; however, this plan is based on old projections that need to be updated. The scope would not allow for the full widening, and staff felt that bringing this into the plan now would be unnecessary and would complicate the environmental review process – it would be best decided at a later time. Mr. Prima assured that the Lockeford Street widening has not been dropped from the City's master plan.

Mr. Swimley reminded Council that in December 2001, the City Council authorized a consultant to proceed with Phases 1 and 2 of the project. Phase 1 included the preliminary engineering, mapping, and cost estimate for the preparation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the railroads. Phase 2 was for the preparation of the MOU. Both phases are nearing completion. Staff has had three meetings with the railroad on this project, and the news is very encouraging. The railroads have also participated in the preliminary design and have committed to assisting the City by 1) providing right-of-way for road purposes, and by 2) requiring tenants to relocate existing utilities for the switchyard north of Lockeford Street, which could result in a savings to the City of \$2 million.

The City Council previously authorized \$240,000 for Phases 1 and 2 of the railroad improvements (preliminary design work). The final design estimate is \$500,000, which includes completion of the engineering details and assembling a biddable project to secure prices. The construction work is estimated at \$7.3 million. The Lodi Avenue reconstruction project estimate of \$3 million is subject to change, as a decision will need to be made on the streetscape and whether the City paves over the tracks or rebuilds. This estimate is similar to a typical downtown street reconstruction project.

In answer to Mayor Pro Tempore Hitchcock, Mr. Prima stated that the original background material was amended to include the \$3 million estimate in order to provide a budget that would allow for whatever enhancements might be desired. The City could do a rebuild for a cost of two-thirds less. Mr. Prima believed that the original submittal to the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), which enabled the City to secure funding for the project, included the reconstruction of Lodi Avenue. However, the Lockeford Street widening was described as a future phase to the project, and not having this included in the project should not jeopardize the City's funding.

Mayor Pennino indicated that prior to any decisions by the Council regarding Lodi Avenue reconstruction, the City would conduct public hearings to obtain citizen, staff, and Council input.

Public Works Director Prima confirmed that immediately after receiving approval from the railroad, staff will cover up the tracks with a thin layer of asphalt, similar to the Main Street tracks, which is not a long-term solution.

Mayor Pennino reiterated that the first priority is the safety issue of getting the tracks covered; whereas, the Lodi Avenue reconstruction project will take time and public input. This will not be a simple project in regard to the street closures as many businesses along Lodi Avenue will be affected.

NOTE: Mayor Pro Tempore Hitchcock left the meeting at 7:26 a.m.

Mr. Swimley stated that Measure K grant funds cover \$6.7 million of the project (\$2.8 million from the Congestion Relief fund; and \$3.9 million from the Railroad Crossing Safety fund). Funding of \$4.4 million is still to be determined. Staff will attempt to secure additional funds from SJCOG, and some may come from the street funds.

The first goal for the project is to finalize the MOU with the railroads. Staff believes that one more meeting with the railroads is necessary to agree on the right-of-way transfer and on when Lodi Avenue can be paved over. Next, the consultant will be authorized to proceed with the final design and begin the bidding process. Subsequently, the Lodi Avenue tracks will be paved over as a temporary improvement, with the total street reconstruction plan to be decided in the future.

Staff will then continue to work on securing the additional \$4.4 million for the project and complete the final railroad design. The railroad design will then be turned over to CCT to bid the project and oversee the rail construction. CCT will bid the project with railroad contractors, which will save the City money.

Future phases include establishing design theme and reconstruction for Lodi Avenue, the K-Mart shopping center entrance (which may be completed sooner in the project), and improvements to the Lockeford Street corridor.

Mr. Swimley presented photographs of the existing conditions on Lodi Avenue, which demonstrate the uneven and rippling pavement, and on Stockton and Lockeford Streets, showing the uneven grade. Diagrams were also displayed showing the subject right-of-way, which the City is attempting to obtain from Union Pacific (UP), the switching facilities, railroad tracks proposed for construction, and connecting curves.

Public Works Director Prima stated that the elimination of the Beckman Road crossing was an option in previous discussions, and staff felt this was worthwhile to do because it eliminates a safety hazard. Regardless, this crossing needs to be improved. The interchange on Lockeford Street is a new element and does involve UP. He hopes to negotiate some cost savings on this by getting UP to agree that the City only pay what it would cost to have a contractor do the work versus UP's labor overhead rates. In addition fiber optic cabling and fuel pipelines need to be relocated at the tenants' expense. The railroads intend to create an "island operation" and abandon the track between Stockton and Lodi one mile east of Highway 99; although, due to one customer on the east side of 99, the railroads cannot abandon the trestle across Highway 99. Creating an island operation solidifies the provision of rail service in Lodi in that the City will have a direct connection to the main line and will not be dependent on CCT to maintain the line in the future. Mr. Prima added that years ago there was talk about CCT being disbanded, but with the industrial growth on the east side, CCT is very interested that the operation in Lodi stays viable.

In reply to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Prima stated that a majority of the railroad-related deaths have occurred on the main UP line in the downtown area and a few by Turner Road. These areas would not be affected by this project. Further, Mr. Prima responded that there would be an increase in railroad traffic on the Kentucky House Branch and a slight increase in the downtown area. The Kentucky House Branch is not being used now; therefore, this project would create new traffic. CCT's operation is servicing customers and taking cars to the main line. In regard to delays, this project will not affect the Lodi Avenue and main line tracks.

In reply to Council Member Land, Mr. Prima stated that there will be longer delays on Lockeford Street, due to trains on the main line that are using the switchyard, which will be slowing down and crossing. Mr. Prima confirmed that no additional property will be acquired; however, every square inch of existing property will be used and a retaining wall will be built on the east side. The track connection on the Turner Road underpass cannot accommodate a longer pass, and changing this in the plan substantially increased the cost estimate. Steps are being taken to minimize delays by installing a power switch to electronically activate the switch, rather than the engineers having to stop and get out. The switchyard will go almost to Turner Road. Mr. Prima stated that the switchyard in the downtown area will most likely not be abandoned.

Mayor Pennino suggested that staff pursue funding to abandon and relocate the existing public switchyard south of Elm to Lockeford Street.

*Continued July 16, 2002*

Council Member Howard stated that she was glad that CCT will continue to provide service because of the need and viability in the industrial area.

Mayor Pennino commended staff on a great job and urged that it continue to keep the pressure on.

**D. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Perrin  
Deputy City Clerk

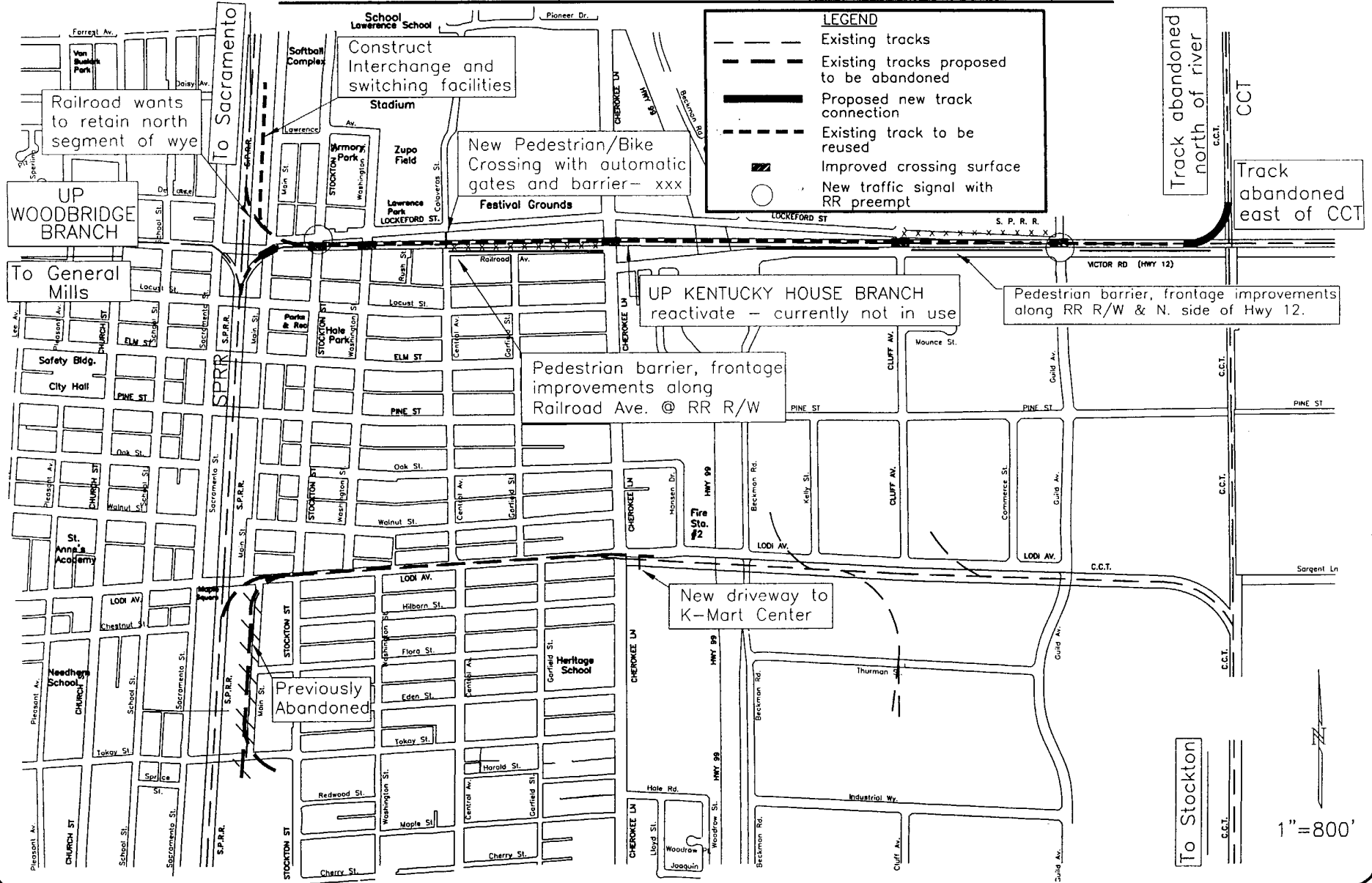
# Lodi Central City Railroad Safety Improvement Project

July 16, 2002

# LODI CENTRAL CITY RAILROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

**LEGEND**

- Existing tracks
- Existing tracks proposed to be abandoned
- Proposed new track connection
- Existing track to be reused
- Improved crossing surface
- New traffic signal with RR preempt



1" = 800'

# Project Background

- December 2001, Council Authorized Consultant To Proceed
  - Phase 1 - Preliminary Engineering, Mapping and Cost Estimating
  - Phase 2 - Prepare Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Railroads
- Both Phases are nearly complete

# Project Background (Cont.)

- Three Meetings with the Railroads Since January
- Railroads Participated in Preliminary Design
- Railroads have committed to assist by:
  - Providing Right -of-Way for Road Purposes
  - Require Tenants to relocate exist utilities if needed



# Project Costs

## (Rail Portion Only)

- Preliminary Design \$ 240,000
- Final Design \$ 500,000
- Construction \$7,360,000
- **Total** **\$8,100,000**

# Project Funding

- Total Estimated Project Costs (Rail Only)
  - \$8.1 Million
- Funding Sources
  - Measure K Grant Funds
    - \$2.8 Million - Congestion Relief
    - \$3.9 Million - Railroad Crossing Safety Funds
    - **\$6.7 Million** - Total Grant Funds Reserved
  - Measure K Maintenance & Local Street Fees
    - **\$1.4 Million**

# What's Next?

- Finalize / Execute MOU
  - One more meeting required with Railroads
  - Agree on Right-of-Way Transfer
  - Agree on when Lodi Avenue Can be Paved Over
- Authorize Consultant to Proceed with Final Design
  - Final Design Cost: \$500,000
  - Design Schedule: 6 Months

## What's Next? (Cont.)

- Pave Over Lodi Avenue
  - Temporary Improvement
  - Total Street Reconstruction in Future
- Secure Additional Measure K Funds
  - Approximately \$1.4 Million

# What's Next? (Cont.)

- Complete Final Railroad Design
- Hand off Railroad Design to CCT
  - Bid Project
  - Oversee Rail Construction
- Plan Future Phases

# Future Phases

- Establish a Design Theme for Lodi Avenue
- Reconstruct Lodi Avenue
  - Add Driveway Into K-Mart Shopping Center
- Widen Lockeford Street
  - 4 Lanes
  - Construct Pedestrian Barriers
  - Pedestrian Crossing at Calaveras Street

# Recap of Project Goals

- Improve Rail Safety in Lodi
- Improve Pavement Surface on Lodi Avenue
  - Initially Pave Over Existing Tracks
  - Future Street Reconstruction for Lodi Avenue
- Encourage Redevelopment of Lodi Avenue Corridor
- Secure Reliable Railroad Service to Lodi Industry
- Widen Lockeford Street

# Questions & Answers